

## Message Text

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21

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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R 191032Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4646

C O N F I D E N T I A L COLOMBO 1379

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E.O. 11652:NGDS

TAGS: PFOR, EAID, PORG, MV

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S FAREWELL VISIT TO MALDIVES: CALL ON  
PRESIDENT NASIR

1. DURING HIS APRIL 15 FAREWELL CALL ON PRESIDENT NASIR OF  
MALDIVES, AMBASSADOR LED OFF SAYING HE HAD NOTED CONSIDERABLE  
DEVELOPMENT DURING MORE THAN THREE YEARS HE HAD BEEN  
VISITING MALDIVES, PARTICULARLY IN TOURIST, MERCHANT MARINE  
AND FISHING INDUSTRIES. PRESIDENT NASIR, WHO  
COMMUNICATED THROUGH INTERPRETER, RESPONDED THAT THIS IS  
GENERALLY TRUE BUT EMPHASIZED GAN ISLAND HAD BECOME  
PROBLEM DUE TO BRITISH WITHDRAWAL (GAN SITUATION IS  
DISCUSSED IN SEPTEL). IN THIS CONTEXT, PRESIDENT RAISED  
QUESTION OF U.S. ASSISTANCE TO MALDIVES BY IN EFFECT  
SAYING THERE HAD NOT BEEN ANY.

2. PURSUING AID THEME, NASIR SAID THAT SPECIFICALLY IN TWO  
CASES WHERE HE HAD PERSONALLY REQUESTED SUCH ASSISTANCE,  
HE HAD BEEN TURNED DOWN. FIRST OCCASION WAS SEVERAL  
YEARS AGO (HE THOUGHT WHEN PRESIDENT KENNEDY WAS IN  
OFFICE), WHEN HE HAD REQUESTED FOOD AID; SECOND WAS  
LAST YEAR WHEN HE HAD REQUESTED AIRCRAFT BE PROVIDED FOR  
AIR MALDIVES. IN FIRST INSTANCE, NASIR SAID HE HAD BEEN  
TOLD U.S. WAS UNABLE TO HELP BECAUSE BRITISH HAD DIRECT  
INTEREST IN MALDIVES, IN SECOND, U.S. HAD AGAIN BEEN  
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UNABLE TO HELP.

3.AMBASSADOR EXPLAINED THAT BECAUSE OF LEGISLATIVE AND OTHER RESTRAINTS

U.S. HAD BEEN UNABLE PROVIDE AIRCRAFT. HE RECALLED, HOWEVER, THAT U.S. HAD PROVIDED SCHOLARSHIPS FOR AMERICAN UNIVERSITY AT BEIRUT, COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT, FOOD GIFT THROUGH WORLD FOOD PROGRAM AND NOTED THAT WE WERE EXPLORING POSSIBILITY OF ASSISTANCE FOR EXPANDING EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM. PRESIDENT NASIR SEEMED UNAWARE OF SOME ASSISTANCE,PERHAPS BECAUSE IT WAS NEGOTIATED BY INCARCERATED FORMER PRIME MINISTER ZAKI,AND IMPLIED THAT, IN ANY CASE, HE DID NOT CONSIDER THIS SIGNIFICANT AMOUNT OF U.S. ASSISTANCE. HE SET FORTH HIS VIEW THAT THERE ARE TWO TYPES OF FOREIGN AID--HELP FOR PROJECTS FOR WHICH GOM REQUESTS AID; AND FOREIGN COUNTRY OFFER TO HELP WHICH RECIPIENT DID NOT NEED TO SAME DEGREE BUT WHICH WAS ACCEPTABLE. EXPRESSING REGRET THAT PRESIDENT NASIR FELT WE HAD NOT BEEN RESPONSIVE ENOUGH, AMBASSADOR NOTED THAT ALTHOUGH HE COULD NOT COMMIT HIS SUCCESSOR OR USG, HE FELT CERTAIN CAREFUL CONSIDERATION WOULD CONTINUE TO BE GIVEN TO SPECIFIC AREAS OF ASSISTANCE REQUESTED BY GOM.

4. TURNING TO MALDIVIAN FOREIGN POLICY, WHICH AMBASSADOR SAID SEEMED NON-ALIGNED, HE ASKED IF PRESIDENT NASIR PLANNED TO ATTEND AUGUST NON-ALIGNED SUMMIT IN COLOMBO. NASIR SAID HE DID NOT THINK SO AS HE FELT NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT HAD DEVELOPED INTO ANOTHER ALIGNMENT OR BLOC AND GOM WANTED TO MAINTAIN MORE DETACHED POSITION. HE WAS HOWEVER, CONSIDERING RE-ESTABLISHING, OVER TIME, REGULAR REPRESENTATION AT UN. ON MENTION OF UN, AMBASSADOR TOOK OCCASION TO BRING UP AREAS OF PARTICULAR CONCERN TO U.S. IN CONTEXT OF UPCOMING UNGA--KOREA, MIDDLE EAST AND PUERTO RICO.

5. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH CORDIAL TONE PREVAILED THROUGHOUT TALK, PRESIDENT LEFT LITTLE DOUBT HE FELT U.S. IS NOT HOLDING UP ITS END WHERE ASSISTANCE TO MALDIVES WAS CONCERNED.

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VAN HOLLEN

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## Message Attributes

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